CHAPTER 1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

This study aims to examine and analyze three short stories by K.S Maniam, a Malaysian English writer of Indian origin, to discover the types of linguistic resources he draws upon in nativizing (the concept of "nativization" will be discussed in detail in Chapter 3) the English language. In particular, this study will focus on rhetorical strategies such as native similes and metaphors, proverbs and idioms, rhetorical devices for "personalizing" speech interactions, culturally dependent speech styles and syntactic devices. The source of data for analysis will be derived from K.S Maniam's collection entitled *Haunting The Tiger* (1996). These stories will also be analyzed to study the effects these nativization processes have on Maniam's attempts to express culture.

The reason this study was carried out is to gain insights about the nativization of rhetorical strategies by a writer from my own country and tradition. Being a Malaysian myself, I am intrigued by the nativization strategies used by a Malaysian writer. I chose Maniam out of an increasing number of Malaysian writers who are writing in English because he is a Malaysian writer of Indian origin. Therefore, he not only has a native (in this study, the term "native" is used to refer to a person's first language and culture, depending on their context) culture which is Indian but also a national culture which is Malaysian. Consequently, I am interested in Maniam's attempts to reconcile his native and national culture in his short stories. Furthermore, I am interested in the types of linguistic and cultural presuppositions that influence Maniam's attempts at nativization. I believe that this study is important because it serves to contribute ideas in the field of discourse analysis of non-native literatures, in particular within the Malaysian context.

This chapter is divided into four sections. The first section will illustrate the spread of English by discussing in detail the types of English used in the Inner, Outer and Expanding circles. The second section focuses on the power and politics of such a linguistic distribution, with an emphasis on the issues surrounding such a spread. Issues such as the role of English as an additional language, types of non-native varieties and attitudes towards these varieties as well as the question of standards will be looked at. In particular, the controversy surrounding attitudes towards the non-native varieties will be examined by paying special attention to Prator's (1968) paper and Kachru's (1986) response. The third section looks at the bilingual writer's position in the transplanted varieties: the concept of "contact" will be examined with a focus on the non-native writer's expression of culture, the dilemmas of the non-native writer and a brief perusal of the Malaysian bilingual's position. Finally, the fourth section outlines the purpose of the study.

1.1 The Spread of English and the Emergence of Transplanted Varieties

The English language which used to be solely confined to England, has spread over the British Isles and the colonies through colonization and migration. The colonies which were under British Administration include places like India, Ceylon (now known as Sri Lanka), West Africa, Malaya (now known as Malaysia), islands in the Pacific and West Indian colonies like Jamaica.

Although the colonial era came to a grinding halt in the late 1940s and 1950s, the spread and development of English in the colonies did not subside. The former colonies, as newly independent nations, viewed English as a language that could fulfill specific

purposes. These countries referred to as the "New Nations" by Platt, Weber and Ho (1984), placed "English not as a language of commerce, science and technology but also as an international language of communication." (1984:1) Thus, the spread of English has been maintained and further encouraged in the post-colonial period, that is the period following independence and the end of colonization.

In some "New Nations", through language planning policies, English has been placed as a strong second language. In Malaysia, language policies such as the above helps pave the way for the emergence of an indigenous language, in this case, Malay, as the medium of instruction. However, with the growing use of English for international educational and economic opportunities, an increasing number of students seek to acquire English as their first or second language. Therefore, the spread and development of English is assured in present times.

Based on its spread and unfaltering growth today, English is viewed as a universal language. According to Kachru (1986: 127), "a universal language is one which, in its various forms and functions, is used by a large portion of the human population for easy communication between people of diverse cultural and language backgrounds."

Although several international attempts have been made to develop a universal language that unites people globally, for example Esperanto, these attempts have failed. One of the reasons for their failure is, unlike English, which is rooted in a long historical tradition, and has spread over time, these languages are new and are not easily accepted.

Consequently, it is no surprise that:

> English has become the most important international language and the most commonly taught second or foreign language in the world. Strevens (1982) gives a figure of over 600 million users of English of whom about half are native speakers and half have either picked up the language or have been taught it. Kachru gives figures, which add up to 115 million for enrolments in classes

for formal English teaching throughout the world." (Platt, Weber and Ho, 1984:2)

As mentioned above, the global spread of English is far and wide, making it a universal language. However, the roles and functions of English is not the same in every country. According to Kachru (1985), the spread of English may be represented in three concentric circles, which illustrate the "types of spread, the patterns of acquisition and the functional domains in which English is used across cultures and language." These circles have been labeled as the inner circle, the outer circle and the expanding circle (refer to the diagram below).

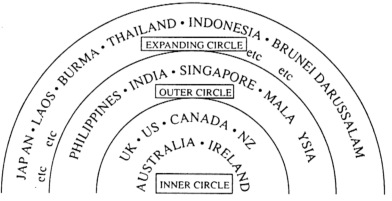

Fig 1. The Inner, Outer and Expanding Circles

1.1.1 The Inner Circle

The inner circle is the traditional base of English where the native speakers of English are found. In these regions, English functions as the primary language of communication. For example, the United States Of America (population 270,311,756),

the United Kingdom (pop. 58,970,119), Canada (pop. 30,675,398), Australia (pop. 18,613,087), and New Zealand (pop. 3,625,388). (The World Factbook, 1998)

1.1.2 The Outer Circle

The outer circle refers to the regions that have an institutionalized variety (see page 10) of English due to the earlier phases of the spread of English. These regions have many shared characteristics, the foremost being that they were colonized by users from the inner circle and therefore have been linguistically and culturally influenced by that experience. Some of the countries in these regions include Nigeria, Kenya, the Republic of South Africa and Ghana in Africa; Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka in South Asia; and the Philippines, Singapore, and Malaysia in Southeast Asia. (Kachru, 1986)

In this circle, English is used as a second language in the linguistic repertoire of a bilingual or multilingual and has acquired an important place in the language policies of these nations. For example, in Singapore it is a significant language of government, law and education (Platt and Weber, 1980; Lowenberg, 1984).

In terms of functions, English in the outer circle is used in a sociolinguistic context that is far removed from the native users' context. Therefore, it has been adapted through acculturation to serve the needs of the non-native user in these new cultural and geographical contexts. According to Kachru (1986), "the result of such uses is that such varieties have developed nativized discourse and style types and functionally determined sublanguages (registers) and are used as a linguistic vehicle for creative writing in various genres." (Kachru, 1986:19) Also, it is used in various domains such as law,

government and education in varying degrees of competence for local and international functions.

Also, institutionalized varieties have notable variations in use depending on the segment of society that uses it. For example, in Malaysia, an institutionalized variety would be Standard Malaysian English. This type of variety would be considered a high variety if it were used by a more educated segment of society (where it would be referred to as an acrolectal or mesolectal variety of English whereas a less educated segment of society would be using a basilectal variety of English). The terms acrolect, mesolect and basilect will be explained on page 17.

1.1.3 The Expanding Circle

As an international language, English has become the most sought after language globally. Even in countries which have not had a long history of colonization by countries where English is the native language, English has become increasingly popular. The users of English in the expanding circle strengthen the evidence of the position of English as a universal language.

This circle represents a large population of the world as it covers countries such as China (population 1,236,914,658), Russia (now known as the former Soviet Union) (pop. 146,861,022), Indonesia (pop. 212,941,810), Greece (pop. 10,662,138), Israel (pop. 5,643,966), Japan (pop. 125,931,533), South Korea (pop. 46,416,796), Nepal (pop. 23,698,421), Saudi Arabia (pop. 20,785,955), Taiwan (pop. 21,908,135), and Zimbabwe (pop. 11,044,147)." (The World Factbook, 1998)

Unlike the outer circle where English is taught as a second language (ESL), in the expanding circle, it is taught as a foreign language (EFL). According to Brown (1995), although the uses of English have been steadily increasing, it is not used for the same range of functions within a nation as English is in the outer circle.

1.2 The Power and Politics of English

With the spread of English around the world, as outlined in the three concentric circles above, it is evident that the language would have acquired various types of control in the realm of linguistics, politics, economics, sociology and history. According to Kachru (1986) "linguistic power" can be viewed as the addition of a code to the linguistic range of a particular speech community and the suppression of a particular language variety in support of another variety.

English has acquired different types of power due to various motivations. Some of these motivations lie within the religious domain where, in the course of colonization, English was used in the context of religious indoctrination. English was also used as a major tool for the acquisition of knowledge in science, technology and the humanities. Furthermore, English was viewed as a symbol of modernization and thus, the attitude of people towards the language became more positive as the language was equated with worldly success.

Besides that, English was also seen as a means of distancing colonized people from their native cultures, and hence was used by the colonizers as part of the so-called "civilizing process" which was seen "... as the development of material and intellectual potential through various processes of Westernization." (Kachru, 1986) Here, it is evident

that the colonizers motivations for linguistic power via English stemmed from purely personal motives whereby the colonized people of Asia and Africa would be stripped of their native cultures in order to uphold the language of an alien culture and serve their new master with unquestioning loyalty.

The parameters of the power of English can be seen in various areas. In terms of demographical and numerical means, there is an unprecedented spread across cultures and languages on practically every continent (Fishman, 1977 and Crystal, 1985 in Kachru, 1986). Functionally, English provides crucial knowledge in science, technology and cross-cultural studies. Attitudinally, English is a symbol of neutrality, liberalism, status and progress to a large group across cultures.

Furthermore, English provides accessibility to people within a nation (intranational) and also across nations (international), hence becoming a link language that unites people regardless of where they live. Also, the multicultural setting in which English is used has resulted in the nativization (the concept of nativization will be explained in Chapter 3) of the language, which is responsible for the gradual absorption of English across cultures. Finally, in terms of materialism, English serves as a potent tool for mobility, economic power and social status.

Due to the overwhelming power of English across the globe, there exists a political struggle within members of the Inner Circle who are in competition with each other to sell their particular model of English to the world. This struggle is clearly seen in the ongoing competition between countries like the USA, the UK and to a lesser degree Australia, who are trying to create a market for teachers or experts from their respective countries. This rivalry between nations of the Inner Circle represents the politics of

English, which has great materialistic gains for these countries if their particular model of English is chosen by a country outside the Inner Circle. These gains include the influx of foreign exchange as increasing numbers of students from the Outer and Expanding Circle will flock to the country of their choice to learn English. Besides the economic gains, the country that succeeds in promoting their model of English to the world will also gain attitudinally because their brand of English will be viewed as the superior choice.

1.2.1 English as an Additional Language

The ongoing process of nativization or the acculturation of English across the globe is influenced by the balance of power that rests between the Inner Circle and the Outer Circle. According to Fishman in Kachru (1983), this balance of power rests on three realities.

Firstly, the spread of English today is being accelerated by non-native interests. The previous era of colonization fuelled the spread of English, which has reached such a level of magnitude that it is currently being fostered by the non-native English world (Conrad and Fishman, 1977 in Kachru, 1986). This is evident in the "army of English speaking ecno-technical specialists, advisors ... the diffusion of English publications, films, radio and television programs, literacy programs and educational opportunities." (Fishman in Kachru, 1983) These non-native countries have their own well developed standard variety of English, which has the ability to oppose the various political, social and economic goals that the English of the Inner Circle serves to achieve. Therefore, the non-native varieties of English have developed in such a manner so as to free their cultures from the earlier linguistic control of the colonial era.

Secondly, due to the continued spread and growth of non-native English, this variety has the potential of becoming the mother tongue in certain speech networks. To prevent the intrusion of English into local ideology, literature, history and citizenship, several countries like the Philippines, Tanzania, India, France and Puerto Rico have regulated the spread of English via status and corpus planning.

Thirdly, another reality that influences the balance of power is the accordance of special protection to local languages. For example, in the Philippines, local languages are used as the media of instruction at the elementary grade level and at all subsequent grades. Therefore the spread of English is controlled by counter balancing it with the sponsored, protected spread of local languages. This has significant consequences for the new learners of English because they learn English in a context of other languages which in turn, influences their perception of English.

1.2.2 Types of Non-native Varieties

As illustrated in the three concentric circles discussed above, non-native varieties are the varieties of English that have developed in the Outer and Expanding Circles due to historical events. These varieties have also resulted through a country's need to develop in areas of education, economy and trade, where it is important to master English for specific purposes. For non-native users in former English colonies, English is viewed as a second language and over time, these countries have developed an "institutionalized" second-language variety of English. An "institutionalized" variety of English has a "long history of acculturation in new cultural and geographical contexts; they have a range of functions in the local educational, administrative, and legal systems." (Kachru, 1986:19)

Based on Kachru's criteria of an "institutionalized" variety of English as mentioned above, an example of an institutionalized variety of English is Standard Malaysian English, which is used in schools, the media and in the government.

Institutionalized second language varieties have been adapted to suit the needs of the new sociolinguistic context. Besides that, they also have a large range of functions in the local, educational, administrative and legal systems. As a result, these varieties have developed their own nativized discourse, particular styles and functionally created sublanguages or registers and it is these features that are drawn upon increasingly for creative writing in various genres.

Institutionalized varieties of English have acquired a wide geographical spread and hence, serve the nations in which they exist in two ways. Firstly, they are used intranationally. This means that an "institutionalized" variety will be used within a country for various functions such as education, the media and for administrative purposes. Secondly, an "institutionalized variety is used internationally. This means that an "institutionalized" variety of English from a particular country will be the official variety of English used in international relations in various domains such as education, media, government and law.

On the other hand, for countries where the non-native English user uses English in highly restricted domains and considers it a foreign language, it is regarded as a "performance" variety of English. This distinction between an "institutionalized" and "performance" variety of English is essential to understand the context for the use of English in a particular country as well as the language planning strategies adopted for teaching English in the variety that is suitable to the context.

Unlike the institutionalized second language varieties of English, performance varieties are purely restricted as a tool of communication for the purpose of acquiring knowledge, conducting trade and establishing international relations. Hence, it functions as a communicative tool for international purposes only. Users of performance varieties who come from countries like China, Japan, Korea and so on, regard English as a foreign language and do not use it for intranational communication.

1.2.3 Attitudes Towards Non-native Varieties

The emergence of non-native varieties has not been accepted positively by everyone. There exists a group of native speakers who view the growth and spread of non-native varieties as a threat. This group is largely made up of *purists* and *cynics.* (Kachru, 1986).

The *purists*, (for example Goffin 1934 and Whitworth 1907 in Kachru 1986) and in its more extreme form, Prator (1968), fought strongly to ensure that there was no deviance from the norm or the colonial model of English, for example British or American English. Some of them sought to produce grammars for second language learners. The *cynics* have a condescending attitude towards the status of localized varieties and the non-native linguistic innovations that have taken place over time. Even though they are aware of the use of a high localized variety in the domains of government, law, education and the media, the *cynics* are hesitant to recognize it as the standard of a particular non-native community. With regard to non-native literatures, which is my concern, the *cynics* are unsure as to whether these literatures should be

accepted as part of the local literary tradition (Kachru, 1986). In addition, the literature on *cynics* does not state if the *cynics* accept non-native literatures as English literature at all.

An important paper that reflects a typical language attitude by several educated native speakers and educators of English towards the non-native varieties is a paper by Clifford H. Prator (1968), a scholar in the field of the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language, entitled "The British Heresy In TESL." In this paper, Prator describes "a second language variety of English" as "a tongue caught up in a process that tends to transform it swiftly and quite predictably into an utterly dissimilar tongue." Prator's paper is discussed at length in the following paragraphs.

Prator's paper clearly reveals that the role of English in new sociolinguistic contexts are not properly understood. The effects of such an attitude for non-native users is that it would be pointless for these countries to expect theoretical insights or professional leadership from TESL specialists as long as this attitude prevails. Furthermore, it falls upon academics within the non-native varieties to present a concrete and coherent account of the issues pertaining to the non-native varieties (Kachru, 1986).

On the other hand, there exists groups such as the *descriptivists* and *pragmatists* whose attitude is more tolerant of the non-native varieties. *Descriptivists* such as Yule and Burnell (1886) in Kachru (1986) study regional phonetic, lexical and grammatical characteristics whereas the *pragmatics* like Kachru (1986) view language as part of a semiotic system in which various linguistic innovations and deviations are related to language function and change. Compared to the *descriptivists*, who look at language in more theoretical terms, the *pragmatics* believe that the context provides meaning.

Therefore, according to the *pragmatics*, as the cultural and linguistic contexts change, language acquires new meaning.

With the spread of the non-native varieties, *pragmatists* like Kachru (1986) have emerged to respond to *purists* such as Prator (1968). Kachru (1986) divides Prator's attitude into seven parts and refers to them as "the seven attitudinal sins":

(1) Firstly, Prator has committed the sin of **ethnocentricism** meaning he has failed to take into account the linguistic innovations of non-native varieties because he has an unrealistic attitude to homogeneity and linguistic conformity.

(2) Secondly, Prator has the **wrong perception** of language attitudes on both sides of the Atlantic and this is evident from his hypothesis that the British attitude towards the African speaker is one of mistrust.

(3) Thirdly, Prator **refuses to recognize** the existence of non-native varieties of English with their own culture-bound forms of communication.

(4) Fourthly, Prator has committed the sin of **ignoring the systemicness** of the non-native varieties.

(5) Fifthly, Prator fails to take into account the **contextual parameters** that mark the distinctness of the non-native varieties of English and instead he has attached too much importance to a native model, which fails to capture the new sociolinguistic setting in which English functions.

(6) Sixthly, instead of focusing on the **context of situation** to determine intelligibility, Prator overemphasizes the role of the phonetic level for example, RP (Received Pronunciation) for language intelligibility.

(7) Finally, in his arguments, Prator exhibits the sin of **language colonialism.** This is apparent in his imposition of a particular variety of English, meaning Standard British English, and an unrealistic prescription, which is the Standard British English model of English to a non-native sociolinguistic setting.

Kachru sums up his response to Prator by stating that the "seven attitudinal sins" have been committed due to three reasons. Firstly, a failure to understand the role of English in new transplanted contexts that are different from that of the native speaker. Secondly, a failure to distinguish between second language learning and foreign language learning. Thirdly, a failure to comprehend the position of English in several non-native speech communities where English functions as a language that serves to unite culturally and linguistically pluralistic societies.

Although the *purists* and *cynics* view the spread of English as a process of decay, recent developments in the spread and uses of English reveal that English is acquiring several international identities as it is used by a growing number of people across the globe (Kachru, 1986). The gradual acceptance of English in new, transplanted sociolinguistic settings and its international uses are clearly reflected in the British linguist J.R Firth's (1956) observation in Kachru (1986: 31):

> To begin with, English is an international language in the Commonwealth, the Colonies and in America. International in the sense that English serves the American way of life and might be called American, it serves the Indian way of life and has recently been declared an Indian language within the framework of the federal constitution. In another sense, it is international not only in Europe but in Asia and Africa, and serves various African ways of life and is increasingly the all-Asian language of politics.

The above observation is important because it reflects the reality of the spread and international uses of English. Furthermore, it reflects the changing trends in the status of English around the world and the demand it places on people's attitudes and perceptions

towards English. Far from being in the depths of degeneration as perceived by the *purists* and *cynics*, English is acquiring new identities, which are an assurance of its continued spread and growth.

1.2.4 A Question of Standards

With the growth and spread of various non-native varieties of English, the divergence between one country's variety and another could become dangerously wide. This would pose serious problems in terms of choosing the best possible model of English for those who are acquiring English as their second or foreign language. Therefore, the question of "intelligibility" among the non-native varieties arises.

In their discussion of "intelligibility", Vogelin and Harris (1951) have stated that "intelligibility" is closely linked to the context of situation, meaning a speaker's success at being understood is highly dependent on a given situation. Therefore, as long as speakers of these varieties are mutually intelligible to each other and are understood by a native speaker even though there is obviously a marked difference between the native speaker and the non-native speaker, that variety of English can be considered intelligible.

Furthermore, "intelligibility" in a particular context also has to do with the participants in a particular conversation. For example, the participants may not be from the same speech community meaning one speaker could be of a higher variety (acrolect) and another of a lower variety (mesolect). (The terms "acrolect" and "mesolect" will be explained on page 17). Hence, the degree of "intelligibility" between participants would be influenced by the degree to which they share characteristics of cultural background, grammatical features and phonological features.

Consequently, the term "degree of intelligibility" can be understood as the extent to which participants of a conversation are understandable to each other. This is further supported by Catford (1950) who states that the role of speech is for eliciting cooperation from those one is speaking to and so far as that conversation produces the appropriate and desired results, it can be considered effective.

Since the focus of this study deals with the nativization of Malaysian writing, my concern has to do with the intelligibility of Malaysian writing. According to Nelson (1985), the intelligibility of a particular non-native text has to do with the reader's attitude towards the non-native text. By virtue of the type of reading required when reading a piece of creative writing as opposed to a daily newspaper, the reader's expectation towards a work of fiction is that he or she would have to work at reading it. Therefore, the reader, particularly the native speaker, would have to furnish himself or herself with sufficient knowledge of the non-native writer's sociocultural milieu to gain a better understanding of non-native fiction.

Nelson (1985) further states that through the years it was the non-native reader who found himself or herself on the outside and who had to make great effort to comprehend a native writer's literary text. However, with the growth and spread of non-native varieties and the emergence of creative writing within these varieties, it is the native reader who finds himself or herself on the outside looking in because he or she would now have to make more effort when reading non-native texts. For example, when a native English reader reads a non-native Indian literary text that has religious allusions to Vedic literature, he or she would have to read an English translation of a Sanskrit epic. After all, it has been the norm for several generations of non-native scholars studying

Milton's *Paradise Lost* to refer to a copy of the Bible to gain a detailed understanding of the epic poem.

Besides the use of a second language institutionalized variety in countries located within the Outer Circles, there also exist lower varieties of an institutionalized variety. For example, the variety used by a lawyer is considered higher than that used by taxi driver. Even though they are both speaking the same language, due to their linguistic depth and range, one is of a higher variety also known as an acrolect and the other is of a lower variety also known as a basilect. The terms acrolect and basilect refer to the high variety and low variety along the speech continum of non-native speakers. These terms emerged from the development of English from a very limited form known as *pidgin* to its transformation into a *creole*. A *creole* is a speech variety that has developed from a *pidgin* when a *pidgin* fulfills more and more functions for a speech community. (Platt, Weber and Ho, 1984). Although not all non-native varieties developed from a *pidgin*, the use of non-native varieties developed along a continuum, ranging from an educated acrolect to a mesolect and basilect, which is spoken by those with very limited English-medium education. According to Platt, Weber and Ho (1984: 8):

> As education through the medium of English became available, a situation developed with people speaking a whole range of speech varieties from the creole to a type close to Standard English. Such a situation has become known as a *post-creole speech continuum*. Those with little or no formal education speak creole or a slightly modified creole. We shall refer to this as the *basilect*. The type of speech closest to Standard English is the *acrolect*. This would be spoken, at least in more formal situations, by those with higher levels of education. The types of speech between the basilect and the acrolect are referred to as *mesolects*.

Based on the above definitions, an acrolect, mesolect and basilect can be represented in the diagram below.

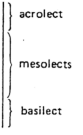

Fig.2 Post-creole continuum

This discrepancy between an institutionalized variety and the sub-varieties that exists within it poses a serious problem for the English teacher and also requires greater awareness from the non-native writer when he or she attempts to represent various segments of society in a particular non-native community.

In order to distinguish between an established second language institutionalized variety and a lower variety, it is essential to have a standard. Platt, Weber and Ho (1984: 162) define standard as:

> ... an ideal towards which one may strive but may not necessarily reach or, on the other hand, it may be considered as one pair which signals *right* or *wrong*. This means that standard is considered to be above a rigid line – anything below this line is *sub-standard*.

However, Platt, Weber and Ho (1984) caution upon taking this definition too literally because they believe that language, being part of human behaviour and real life, has no clear-cut dichotomy. Therefore, language teachers need a model of the language they intend to teach and this leads us to the term norm, which represents guidelines for language behaviour that is bound by the context of situation.

During the colonial era, the model for English language learning and teaching

consisted of either British or American English. These "norms" were usually restricted to the written form and hardly took into account the spoken norms of a particular colony. The dialogues that were presented to the non-native user in these colonies existed in text books that were staged and hardly represented the standardized variety of English that reflected the cultures of the non-native user.

Platt, Weber and Ho (1984) make a distinction between the standard variety of English in an "institutionalized" variety and a "performance" variety by drawing attention to the points of reference for each variety. For an "institutionalized" variety, the standard would be the highest variety or the variety used by the educated speakers in the society (acrolect). It is this variety which serves the functional purpose for many of the communicative needs of the community (however, the use of this variety depends a great deal upon the speaker's educational background).

Consequently, Platt, Weber and Ho (1984) have suggested that in a non-native English context, the most appropriate teaching model would be the acrolect of a non-native speech community. It is this local standard that should be used as a point of reference for the non-native varieties of English, not only in formal written English but also in the whole range of language behaviour from formal to informal spoken and written language.

As for the "performance" varieties of English, where English will always remain a foreign language, external standards are needed. In these countries (Japan for example), English is not required to serve the communicative needs of the community. Therefore, the point of reference for these varieties is an external standard, usually a British or American model.

1.3 Point of Contact: The Bilingual Writer

The spread of English among non-native English speakers has also resulted in the development of non-native literatures in English. Since many native populations consist of "linguistically separated native populations" (Sridhar in Kachru, 1983: 293), English has emerged as a popular link language that is used to represent their immediate reality. Although most of these writers are bilingual, some of them write only in English. These writers view English as a language of unification and a creative outlet for the expression of national sentiments.

In choosing English as a vehicle for literary expression, non-native writers have had to use it in a manner that truly reflects their world as well as making it accessible to the international community. As Raja Rao (1943: viii) said: "Our method of expression has to be a dialect which will someday prove to be as distinctive and colorful as the Irish and American."

The manner in which these writers make their language "distinctive" and "colorful" is through the process of "nativization" which will be discussed in depth in Chapter 3.

1.3.1 Contact in Non-native Literatures

According to Kachru (1986: 161),

> What does the term "contact literatures" imply? The term refers to the literatures in English written by the users of English as a second language to delineate contexts which generally do not form part of what may be labeled the traditions of English literature (African, Malaysian and Indian and so on) ... Contact literatures, like languages in contact, have two faces: their own face and the face they acquire by linguistic contact with another language and society.

These literatures are a reflection of two worlds. Firstly, they capture the essence of their native sociocultural setting, and secondly, they present the new sociolinguistic setting they have acquired as a result of their contact with another language and society. Therefore, contact literatures have a national identity and a separate linguistic distinctiveness, which makes them Indian, African, Malaysian and so on.

Due to their linguistic distinctiveness, contact literatures have a range of discourse devices and cultural assumptions that are different from those of native English literatures. As a result, the reader would have to extend his or her knowledge to an understanding of the varied heritages of African and Asian contexts. Kachru (1986) states that this type of historical and cultural expansion demands a new literary sensibility and extended cultural awareness from a reader who is outside that particular speech fellowship.

On the part of the non-native writer, there would have to be an effort to remake and reshape the language to explore and bring forth the world of another culture and environment.

1.3.2 Language and Culture

Besides serving as a tool for communication, language also reflects the culture of the community that uses it (Jong, 1992). This has great implications for the study of non-native literatures. Even though the non-native writer writes in English, the cultural base is distinct as some non-native writers represent an African, Indian or Malaysian context. Each context is unique as it expresses a different cultural heritage and value system.

(In Chapter 2, I will discuss the cultural implications of language upon a text, provide a definition of culture, present a framework for the analysis of culture and discuss how some scholars have studied the expression of culture in communication).

1.3.3 The Dilemmas of the Bilingual Writer

According to Platt, Weber and Ho (1984), bilingual writers try to present their experiences and thoughts in an authentic manner so that a wider audience would get a glimpse of their culture and society. In this study, the term "bilingual" is used to refer to people who speak two or more languages but use only two languages for creative writing. A large number of these societies belong to cultures that have a long written tradition, for example, Chinese, Indian and Malay. Others have a rich tradition of oral literature such as countries in Africa and the Carribean.

Therefore, the bilingual writer has to make it apparent that he or she is writing about people, places and events in an area that is not Britain, the USA, Australia or New Zealand. One of the ways non-native writers do so is by creating characters who exhibit their cultural identity through the variety of English they speak, for example Malaysian English, Indian English, Nigerian English and so on. However, this is not an easy task to accomplish.

The major dilemma faced by the bilingual writer is the problem of representing the dialogue of characters who are in a non-native English cultural background. According to Platt, Weber and Ho (1984), there are three main methods used by some writers to represent other languages.

Some writers "use a non-localized variety of English, with possibly the inclusion of some words and expressions from the language(s) which the characters would actually use." (Platt, Weber and Ho, 1984: 183) This method is used by a Singaporean writer, Lim Beng Hap in the short story *Poonek* (Platt, Weber and Ho, 1984: 184):

> "Watch out, Mahsen, watch out!" Mahsen turned to look at Louisa. She was still sitting on the branch of the tree, but now she was pointing towards the water. "*Buaya*!" she screamed. "A crocodile!" Mahsen looked at the river. The water was still. There was scarcely a ripple ...

Here, the writer uses a Malay word, "buaya" which is immediately translated (crocodile).

The second method used by non-native writers is the translation of expressions and structures from local languages. For example in West Africa, several writers present their characters speaking in a type of English which is a refection of local languages like Igbo. One such writer is the Nigerian writer Chinhua Acebe, who has one of his characters, The Chief Priest in the novel *Arrow Of God* (1965: 29), telling his sons, the reason he wants him to attend church:

> I want one of my sons to join these people and be my eyes there. If there is nothing in it you will come back. But if there is something there you will bring home my share. The world is like a mask dancing.

The third method employed by writers further exacerbates the problem of dialogue because it is not likely to make their work accessible to an international community. This method requires presenting characters who are of Western origins speaking in English while using the local language for short conversations with local people.

This method is evident in the Malaysian play *A Tiger Is Loose In Our Community* by Edward Dorall (1972) where the writer indicates that certain characters would be speaking in a local language (Platt, Weber and Ho, 1984: 187):

Hoong Tan: I think you cheat ah.
San Fan *(speaking in Cantonese as he slams down the cards):*
Cheat ah? Say that again.
Hoong Tan: *(also in Cantonese):* You cheat.

Based on the above examples, it is apparent that the bilingual writer has to employ various strategies as illustrated above to deal with his or her unique dilemma of representing a world that is culturally different from that of a native speaker.

1.3.4 The Malaysian Bilingual Writer

According to Platt and Weber (1980), the use of English in Malaysian literature is a recent phenomenon. Previously, much of the literature in English that emerged from then Malaya was written by Europeans who had lived here for an extended period of time like Frank Swettenham and Sir Hugh Clifford.

Malaysia is made up of three distinct groups consisting of Malays, Chinese and Indians. Each group belongs to cultures that have a long written tradition. While some writers continued these traditions by writing in Malay, Chinese and various Indian languages, others have chosen English as their medium of creative expression. One of the reasons they chose English is because of its international accessibility and their intention to share their distinct experiences and thoughts with a wider audience (Platt, Weber and Ho, 1984).

Page (1973: 73) has stated that "outside Britain, a new kind of interest is to be found in the overseas varieties of English, which have established themselves, or are in the process of doing so, and in which a literature is beginning to arise." This observation is indeed accurate in the light of an increasing pool of non-native writers who are writing in the tradition of great writers such as V.S Naipaul, Amos Tutuola and Chinua Achebe.

These writers have written in English without losing sight of their own vernacular, hence producing a new stylized variety of English.

It is this challenge of capturing the different speech styles that are functioning within a particular non-native society that becomes a great task for the non-native writer who is writing in English. In line with this, non-native writers have had to flavour their language with local idioms, create dialogue that reflects the local varieties of English, and so on: it is these efforts that define a particular non-native literature as distinctively Indian, Nigerian or Malaysian.

In Malaysia, English is officially a second language (Lim, 1994) and a small body of writing known as Malaysian English fiction has gradually emerged. According to Lim (1994: 136), this body of writing is by and large produced by ethnic Eurasian, Chinese and Tamil writers, suggesting that "English is an ethnic-neutral instrument whose international character counters a national language or cultural dominance to express fragmentations resulting from exclusions and suppresions."

In Malaysia, where Bahasa Melayu (Malay Language) is the official language, ethnic minorities have the choice of three languages available to them, for example, their own mother tongue, Bahasa Melayu and English. Hence, the Malaysian bilingual writer is in the unique position of representing his or her own native culture, and a national culture through a second language which is neutral enough to carry the tint of two cultures. The meeting point of both cultures is English, which is also accessible to an international audience.

According to Lim (1994: 136), the Malaysian bilingual writer constructs fiction that captures multiple cultural systems, which are both "ancient and modern, Western and

Asian, proletarian and bourgeois." Lim states that novels by writers who are working from the fringe, meaning, writers who are not part of a mainstream national language, usually deal with issues such as fragmented identities which are a direct result of the collapse of geographical and cultural boundaries. English is especially suitable for the Malaysian bilingual writer because he or she can work with second language to carve out an autonomous identity in a world that is seeped in a national culture and a native culture. This means, using a second language, in this case English, the Malaysian bilingual writer can capture both, his or her native culture, for example Indian, and also, his or her national culture, which is Malaysian. By virtue of its neutrality, English has the potential to carry the tint of both a native as well as a national culture.

In the case of K.S Maniam, he was born and bred in Sungai Petani. After completing his Form Five, he attended Brinsford Lodge in Wolverhampton, England to train as a teacher. Upon his return to Malaysia, he was posted to Kuala Ketil and Pulau Langkawi where he taught until 1970, whereupon he enrolled as an undergraduate at the University of Malaya. He went on to do his Masters and in 1979, he was employed as a lecturer at the university's Department of English.

Maniam in Kee (1992) has stated that as a Malaysian writer writing in English, he has encountered several problems. Firstly, he believes that there is not a big enough audience. According to him, this problem is further exacerbated with the decline of the standard of English in Malaysia. Secondly, Maniam states that he feels the need to present Malaysians of other cultures in his writing. However, this has been a difficult task because he has based most of his writing on other races from his observations of friends from other races, reading up on their cultures and social structures. In other words he has

not had the advantage of observing them from a closer perspective. Thirdly, Maniam states that it is difficult to represent the type of English spoken by characters who actually do not speak English in real life.

Malaysia consists of three large ethnic groups and they are the Malays, Chinese and Indians. Historically, the three communities existed harmoniously even though they lived apart from each other. Traditionally, the Malay population settled mainly in the rural areas, the Chinese in small, bustling townships and the Indians in rubber plantations. However, with independence and wider educational opportunities, the three ethnic groups interacted increasingly often with each other. In spite of this, it is still difficult to produce a detailed, accurate representation of each ethnic group unless one lives among members of each ethnic group. Otherwise, one's observations will be merely based on generalizations and second hand information, which is certainly one of the dilemmas for the Malaysian bilingual writer, as pointed out by Maniam in Kee (1992).

In the final analysis, it can be said that the Malaysian bilingual writer is in the unique position of capturing a changing culture and world view which is both diverse and rich and making it accessible to an international audience through his or her use of English.

1.4 The Purpose of the Study

This study will examine and analyze three short stories by K.S Maniam, a Malaysian writer of Indian origin who writes in English. The purpose of the analysis is to discover the types of linguistic and cultural resources he draws upon in nativizing the English Language. In particular, the study will focus on rhetorical strategies such as:

(a) native similes and metaphors

(b) rhetorical devices for "personalizing" speech interaction

(c) proverbs and idioms

(d) culturally-dependent speech styles

(e) syntactic devices

Based on the analysis, I will make conclusions on the effects these processes have on K.S Maniam's attempts to express culture within the Malaysian context. Furthermore, the results of this study will be compared to other studies to observe its consistency with other findings.

The studies I will look at will be divided according to two broad issues, which I believe will help me in my observations of K.S Maniam's attempts to express culture within the Malaysian context.

The first issue is that of nativization strategies and the linguistic resources drawn upon by non-native writers like K.S Maniam. Among the studies that will be reviewed in the next chapter are Sridhar (1983), Weir (1983), Goke Pariola (1987), Pandharipandhe (1987) and Kachru (1987).

The second issue is the non-native writer's struggle to express culture in a multi-cultural, multi-lingual context. With regard to this, the studies I will review in the next section are Yamuna Kachru (1987), LoCastro (1987) and Dissanayake and Nichter (1987).

1.5 Significance of the Study

As mentioned above, non-native literatures in English are receiving the interest and attention of an international audience (Page, 1973). These literatures provide an excellent resource for learning about cross-cultural communication and more importantly, for learning about the discourse strategies employed by non-native writers to make their work accessible to an international audience. Based on my reading, I have encountered several studies carried out in various countries, for example, India (Kachru, 1986; Sridhar, 1983; Yamuna Kachru, 1987; Pandharipande, 1987), Japan (LoCastro, 1987), Nigeria (Goke Pariola, 1987), Philippines (Cruz, 1986; Gonzalez, 1987), Singapore (Strevens, 1983; Platt, Weber and Ho, 1984) and so on. These studies have inspired me to embark on a study about the nativization of rhetorical strategies within the Malaysian English context.

This study is significant for three reasons. Firstly, it will add insights and observations into the growing body of research in the field of discourse analysis of non-native literatures, particularly with relation to the Malaysian situation. Secondly, it will provide insights into the new cultural and linguistic dimensions that influence non-native writing, particularly in a country where English functions as a second language. Thirdly, it will further establish the legitimacy of non-native varieties of English by pointing out the creative and innovative efforts that have been used to produce non-native literary texts.